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ENG 3705-600: American Multicultural Literatures

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English 3705: American Multicultural Literatures Online Course Policy & Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Melissa Ames

Term: Summer 2015

Contact Information: Preferred Contact - Email (through Desire2Learn): mames@online.eiu.edu

Alternate Contact – Phone (available during office hours): 734-277-3166

Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 1:00-2:00pm

Course Description: This course studies race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, and disability in American literatures, featuring African-American, Asian-American, Native-American, Latino/a, and immigrant American Writers. Students will analyze narratives from across time periods, genres, and media, attending to various themes/motifs (e.g. hybrid identity, Americanization, the American Dream, passing, othering, etc.) and will critique the concept of multiculturalism more broadly.

Course Outcomes: After the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Read fiction and nonfiction, expressing a wide range of cultural perspectives and values, and develop abilities to think critically and write analytically about them.
2. Engage in reading and writing experiences about literature in order to demonstrate an increased understanding or an appreciation for social, cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic ideas.
3. Understand the relationship that narratives have to one another (despite differences in media or genre) and to the cultural/social/historical time period in which they are created, produced, and consumed.
4. Study stylistic feature of narrative texts and form arguments concerning their effect on consumers.
5. Analyze thematic variations across a range of texts, attending to how genre and mediated form impact those variations.
6. Critique important course concepts (e.g. the concept of multiculturalism, the social construction of identity) through discussion and extended writing assignments.
7. Develop research skill, including effective use of source materials and the principles of documentation, and apply that skill to the study of literature and media analysis.
8. Apply research from outside disciplines (e.g. political science, history, art) to the study of literature, film, television, and other artifacts from popular culture.
9. Work collaboratively in order to explore ideas, formulate arguments, and present findings in a scholarly fashion.

Prerequisite Knowledge: Prior to taking this course, students must have passed English 1002 (Composition & Literature) with a C or higher. Having taken and passed English 2205 (Introductory to Literary Studies) is recommended but not required. In order to succeed in this online course, students should have technological skills that include (but are not limited to): navigating an online course management system (e.g. Desire2Learn), composing emails, accessing online files and web links, and submitting properly formatted assignments as attachments or through dropbox procedures.

Required Texts:

Alvarez, Julia. *How the Garcia Girls Lost their Accents*. NY: Penguin, 2005.

Butler, Octavia. *Kindred*. NY: Nascorp, 2004.

Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. NY: Vintage, 2006. [pdf]

Okubo, Mine. *Citizen 13660*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1983.

Piercy, Marge. *Woman on the Edge of Time*. NY: Fawcett, 1985.

And ONE of the following:

Abdel-Fattah, Randa. *Does my Head Look Big in This?* NY: Orchard Books, 2005.
Alexi, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*. NY: Little Brown, 2007.
Anderson-Halse, Laurie. *Wintergirls*. NY: Viking, 2009.
Levithan, David. *Boy Meets Boy*. NY: Knopf, 2013.
Meyer, Walter Dean. *Monster*. NY: First Harper Tempest, 1999.
Yang, Gene. *American Born Chinese*. NY: First Second, 2006.

Note: Other texts (and excerpts) will be available as PDFs located in the individual weekly course modules.

Course Requirements: This course consists of various writing activities/assignments, online discussions of assigned readings, peer review sessions, collaborative group work, and a final exam. Your grade will be based on a point system that factors in all scores you earn on all assignments and class activity/participation. Active and constructive class participation will make a positive impact on your overall grade. Detailed assignment instructions and scoring rubrics will accompany all major assignments as the course progresses.

Class Work/Participation (200pts):

Weekly work – includes class activities, writing, peer response, and group work.

Response Pieces – includes short formal or informal written responses to the required reading, the media critiques, and class discussion/debates.

Participation – **includes attendance (regular, timely posts and submissions)**, participation in class activities, and course preparation. Points may be deducted due to lack of participation, tardy discussion board posts, participation that demonstrates lack of preparation, and/or behavior (netiquette) that disrupts class activities or negatively affects the learning environment. Unless otherwise noted in the learning module for a given week, discussion board posts are due by Tuesday 11:59pm and responses to peer posts are due by Friday 11:59pm of the assigned week. (For more information on these policies see the course documents for discussion board activity and netiquette).

Formal Writing Assignments/Assessments/Projects (750 pts):

Essay #1 (Representations of the American Dream): A short essay discussing how the American Dream is portrayed in literature and/or popular culture. (100pts)

Essay #2 (Film Review): A film review critiquing a movie focused on cultural conflict. (100pts)

Essay #3 (Stereotypes in the Media): A short essay discussing how the media reinforces or critiques the use of stereotypes. (100pts)

Group Book Club Project & Presentation: A collaborative group project studying an assigned novel. This project will require group (online) meetings, research compilation, and a formal group presentation. (250pts)

Final Exam: An essay exam focusing on the course study of textual stylistics (and differences related to genre, media, and audience). Students will be expected to discuss the major narratives (print and media) covered during the semester as they relate to the course focus. (200pts)

Course Grade: Your grade in this course will be calculated using a straight point system and standard grading scale. Your final grade will be determined by the following breakdown and grading scale:

Formal Writing Assignments/Essays:	750 pts
Class Work/Participation/Discussion Board Posts:	250 pts
Total Points Possible:	1000pts

A = 90% -100%

B = 80% - 89%

C = 70% - 79%

D = 60% - 69%

F = 0% - 59%

Instructor Class Policies:

Submitted Assignments: All documents must be submitted on time and have a professional appearance. Every assignment should be composed through Word formatted according to MLA guidelines and standards when applicable. (If you are unfamiliar with MLA 2009 guidelines please utilize Purdue's Online Writing Lab at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>). Writing assignments will be submitted as instructed in the weekly modules and on the assignment sheet instructions.

Assignment Due Dates & Instructor Feedback: **LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL RESULT IN A GRADE OF ZERO (0).** Assignments, including drafts, are due at on or before the day/time listed on weekly module and assignment sheet. Students will receive feedback on every assignment within a week after the due date.

Class Activities: Class activities must be completed during the week in which they are assigned. No make-ups will be given on any of these activities unless arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Class Attendance: Because this course is discussion heavy and emphasizes writing as process and as collaborative activity, attendance is essential. This means that you should expect to log onto Desire2Learn a minimum of two times per week and contribute regularly to the discussion board conversation and the critiques of your classmate's work. During the projects, your classmates will rely on your feedback. Class exercises, peer responses, and group work cannot be made up and their lack of completion will negatively affect your class work/participation grade. Therefore, absences (not having a regular online presence) negatively affect your grade. For an absence to be excused it must be considered a legitimate and verifiable emergency and documentation must be provided. Legitimate and verifiable emergencies include those instances for which you can provide documentation for why you had to miss class. Acceptable documents include accident reports, doctors' notes, hospital forms, and employer notices. Although these documents will be accepted, any pattern of documented absences will be questioned and addressed. Perfect attendance (fulfilling the minimum requirements of the discussion board activity and completing all activities/assignments on time) merits the addition of 25 extra-credit points to the class work/participation category.

Proper Documentation of Emergency: Assignments may only be turned in late if the student provides documentation of an emergency that prevented him/her from attending class. Proper documentation must be an original (scanned) document, containing the student's name, and cover the date(s) in question, and be signed by a professional (i.e. doctor). An email is not proper documentation.

Plagiarism: In accordance with English Department and University policies, "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author represented as one's own - has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office." The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else's work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing might constitute plagiarism, please consult me prior to turning in the final draft.

Technology Support: EIU has various support systems in place to help students with technology-based concerns. Please utilize the below resources as needed throughout the semester.

ITS Help Desk
Location: 1014 Student Services Building
Phone: 217-581-HELP (4357)
Email: itshelp@eiu.edu
Web: <http://its.eiu.edu/userservices.php>

CATS Training Services for Students
Located in the Gregg Technology Center
Phone: 217-581-8358
http://www.eiu.edu/~cats/home/training_student.php
Gregg Technology Center
Phone: 217-581-7633
web: <http://www.eiu.edu/cats/home/gtc.php>

Booth Library Services
Phone: 217-581-6072
Toll Free: 1-866-862-6684
Web: <http://www.library.eiu.edu>

Students with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (217) 581-6583. Note that EIU online courses must abide by the Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act (IITAA): <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/IITAA/>.

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to maintain principles of academic integrity and conduct as defined in EIU's Code of Conduct (<http://www.eiu.edu/judicial/studentconductcode.php>). In accordance with English Department and University policies, "Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism – the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of such as one's original work – has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including immediate assignment of the grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office." Therefore, violations will be reported to the Office of Student Standards. The best argument against plagiarism is that you cheat yourself out of the education you are here to obtain when you copy someone else's work. If you believe that a specific instance in your writing might constitute plagiarism, please consult your instructor prior to turning in the final draft.

The Student Success Center & Writing Center: Students who are having difficulty achieving their academic goals are encouraged to contact the Student Success Center (www.eiu.edu/~success) for assistance with time management, test taking, note taking, avoiding procrastination, setting goals, and other skills to support academic achievement. The Student Success Center provides individualized consultations. To make an appointment, call 217-581-6696, or go to 9th Street Hall, Room 1302. The Writing Center is also a resource that students can utilize to improve their performance in this course. For more information visit their website (<http://castle.eiu.edu/writing/>). To schedule an appointment, call 217-581-5929, or stop by Coleman Hall, Room 3110 during open hours.

English 3705 Course Schedule

Note: Detailed directions and submission instructions for all weekly reading assignments & class activities are found in the learning modules & learning guides housed on D2L. Each week typically consists of **two** thematically linked modules (units). Read through the learning guides for **both** modules at the start of the week to ensure that you meet all deadlines as sometimes these can be staggered across modules (i.e. a preliminary task from a later module may actually be due before a follow-up task from an earlier module).

Week One (June 15-June 21):

(Module One) Introduction to Course: Exploring the Social Construction of Identity

(Module Two) Americanization & Intergenerational Conflict

Student Introductions & Book Club Preference Sheet & Group Form Due

Week Two (June 22-June 28):

(Module Three) Hybrid-Identity as Portrayed in Literature

(Module Four) Immigration Narratives & the American Dream

Essay #1 & Minutes from Book Club Meeting I Due

Week Three (June 29-July 5):

(Module Five) Critiquing Historical Accounts: Who Tells the Stories & Whose Stories Get Told?

(Module Six) How Literature Engages with and Revises “Official” Historical Accounts

Minutes from Book Club Meeting II Due

Week Four (July 6- July 12):

(Module Seven) How History Inspires Literature: Responses to Social Injustice across Genre

(Module Eight) Cultural Conflict as Explored in Film

Essay #2 Due & Minutes from Book Club Meeting III Due

Week Five (July 13- July 19):

(Module Nine) Sexuality & Cultural Stereotypes in American Popular Culture

(Module Ten) Age, Race, Gender, & Sexuality: Identity Struggles in Young Adult Literature

Book Club Group Project & Presentation Due

Week Six (July 20-July 26):

(Module Eleven) Literature & Disability Studies: Looking Beyond American Texts

(Module Twelve) Critiquing the Concepts of Multiculturalism & Universal Experiences

(Revised) Essay #3 Due

Finals Week (July 27- July 29): (Module Thirteen) Final Reflections on Course Study

Final Exam – Reflective Essay Due